

As a frequent business flyer (several trips per month) but domestically and internationally, I am writing to beg you to delay any implementation of plans for cell phone use inflight until such time as special accommodation can be made for such users. I understand that we are a few years away from allowing passengers to use their cell phones in flight but are moving inexorably toward this goal, due to demand from passengers.

However, please consider the views of the many passengers who share my view. I am also a frequent AMTRAK traveler on the Washington to New York City corridor. AMTRAK usually offers one "quiet" car per train for some, but not all, of its runs along that corridor. When there is no Quiet Car, it is impossible to work or relax because of the constant loud business and often personal conversations being conducted on cell phones. Sometimes for hours I have been forced to listen to very personal conversations by teenagers and their friends and very tedious business reports being read line by line and page after page by loud cell phone users.

Believe me, there is no way to get them politely to stop or even speak more quietly. Conductors on the train have tried to no avail. Right after the conductor leaves, the volume goes back up. Imagine how horrible this will be on a crowded plane when you are packed three abreast with no recourse but to listen for hours to some guy talking to his lawyer about his legal problems. The potential for air rage is high.

Most cell phone users in enclosed spaces (Metro cars here in DC, trains, restaurants, for example) are oblivious or even deliberate in their lack of courtesy. Polite requests to speak in low tones are ignored, especially as they scream "can you hear me?" repeatedly into their phones. We already hear them yelling on planes, before the doors close and as we taxi to the gate.

Is there no way to delay implementation of the new cell phone regulation until some accommodation can be made for 1) isolating cellphone users in designated rows with special sound-dampening--like smokers used to be, or 2) installing technology such as is being developed in Japan (where cellphone use is generally more polite)--such as plastic cones for cellphone privacy?.

I appreciate your consideration.

Very truly yours,

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